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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 11328

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR, KS, JA
SUBJ: ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS: FONMIN KIMURA'S STATEMENTS

REF: A. SEOUL 5681
B. SEOUL 5726

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: FONMIN KIMURA REITERATED PUBLICLY AUG 30 HIS JUDGEMENT THAT NORTH KOREA DOES NOT POSE MILITARY THREAT TO ROK, ELABORATING TO SAY THAT PRESENCE OF UN AND US FORCES PLUS MOVEMENT TOWARD DETENTE IN ASIA AND ON KOREAN PENINSULA HAVE CHANGED KOREAN EQUATION. IN SAME CONTEXT HE SAID NIXON -SATO COMMUNIQUE HAS BEEN OVERTAKEN BY DEVELOPMENTS IN KOREA AND IN SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. RESPONDING TO QUERY ABOUT THREAT TO ROK FROM NORTH KOREA DURING DIET INTERPEALLATIONS AGUUST 29, FONMIN KIMURA SAID, "EXISTANCE OR ABSENCE OF SUCH A THREAT SHOULD FIRST BE JUDGED BY THE SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENT BUT THAT GOJ DOES NOT BELEIVE IN EXISTANCE
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OF SUCH A THREAT FROM NORTH." FOLLOWING INTERPELLATIONS,

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KIMURA HAS ATTEMPTED TO MODIFY STATEMENT. KIMURA STARTED PRESS BACKGROUNDER IMMEDIATELY AFTER INTERPELLATIONS CALLING HIS REMARK A "SLIP OF TONGUE" AND HE TOLD FOREIGN PRESS LUNCHEON GROUP AUGUST 30 (EMBOFF ATTENDED), "HE HAD NOT COMMUNICATED WELL". ON BOTH ACCASIONS, KIMURA MODIFIED DIET STATEMENT SAYING THAT PRESENCE OF UN FORCES AND US FORCES UNDER BI-LATERAL AGREEMENT CREATED BLANACE OF MILITARY FORCE IN KOREAS. SITUATION ALSO AFFECTED BY MOVEMENT TOWARD GNEERAL DETENTE AND JJLY 4, 1972, AGREEMENT BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, KIMURA SAID GOJ'S OBJECTIVE JUDGEMENT WAS THAT THERE WAS NO IMMEDIATE DANGER OF MILITARY ATTACK FROM NK.

2. IN SAME CONTEXT, IN DIET AND AT PRESS LUNCHEON, KIMURA GAVE VIEWS ON NIXON-SATO 1969 COMMUNIQUE SAYING THAT IN PRESENT SITUATION GOJ POSITION IS THAT PEACE AND ST?-LITH IN THE ENTIRE KOREAN PENINSULA ARE VITAL TO SECURITY OF JAPAN. AT FOREIGN PRESS LUNCHEON HE WNET FURTHER TO SAY NIXON-SATO '69 COMMUNIQUE WAS LEADERS' VIEW AT TIME OF SITUATION, NOT A TREATY OR AGREEMENT WHICH IS LEGALLY BINDING. SITUATIONS VIS-VIS KOREA AND TAIWAN HAVE CHANGED, LATTER CASE MARKEDLY HAS FAR AS JAPAN IS CONCERNED, BUT HE SAID USE OF US BASES UNDER US-JAPAN MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY IN BOTH AREAS UNCHANGED.

3. FINALLY, AGAIN IN RESPONSE TO PRESS LUNCHEON QUERY AS TO WHATHER GOJ HAD EVIDENCE NK AND CHOSOREN WERE BEHIND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT, KIMURA ANSWERED ONLY INDIRECTLY BY SAYING THERE WAS "SUBSTANTIAL VARIANCE" BETWEEN EVIDENCE ROK POLICE FORWARDED TO JAPAN AND EVIDENCE JAPANESE POLICE HAD VERIFIED. HE NOTED THAT JAPANESE INVESTIGATION WAS STILL UNDERWAY AND ADDED THAT JAPAN WOULD COOPERATE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE WITHIN JAPANESE LAW.

4. PRIOR TO PRES. PARK'S CALLING IN AMB. USHIROKU, FONOFF NE ASIA DIV DIRECTOR SEO TOLD EMBOFF (LATE AUG. 30) ROK HAD MADE ONLY TWO OFFICIAL REQUESTS OF GOJ REGARDING ASSASSINATION ATTEPT: 1) TO COOPERATE IN CONFIDENTIAL

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RAPID INVESTIGATION OF CASE AND 2) TO ATTEMPT TO CURB ACTIVITIES OF CHOSOREN. ROK HAD NOT ASKED THAT GOJ TURN YOSHIIS NOR KIM HO-RYUNG OVER TO ROK AUTHORITIES.

5. COMMENT: WE WILL BE COMMENTING BY SEPTEL ON SERIOUS JAPANESE CONCERN ABOUT STATE OF ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS AND OUR RESPONSE ROKG APPROACH REPORTED REF. B.

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